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# Record

By Erich Bridges  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

BACUNGAN, Philippines (BP) — Nestor Balantucas' field climbs the same slope as the little Baptist church he helped build.

His four acres produce a healthy crop these days, and he has goats, horses, and a cow.

Prospects weren't always so bright. A few years ago, the soil of his hillside on the Philippine island of Mindanao "was always washing away, so my harvest was always low," he recalls. "We didn't have enough to eat, and our children were not healthy."

One day Noel Elmundo, a young extension worker from

the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center, came to the area.

He listened to the farmer's troubles, then showed him how to plant lines of hedgerows to stop soil erosion — a simple method called SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology).

It took determination and extra work, but Balantucas wasn't alone.

"Noel was here every day to help me if I ran into problems," he says. "We're still poor, but we eat three times a day."

Elmundo and James Bayron, another Rural Life Center worker who serves as pastor of the little church, also led Balantucas and his wife to faith in Christ.

After talking about better agricultural methods with farmers, "we sit down and talk about the Word of God," Elmundo explains. "We are extensionists not only for the soil but the soul. We plant life. Our mission is that the people will have a good life and a spiritual life."

Strolling around Balantucas' place, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionary Harold Watson of Hattiesburg notices the farmer's family now has something else they once lacked: an outhouse.

That may be a sign of poverty in rural America, but in rural Mindanao it's "an indication of progress," says Watson, founder of the Rural Life Center.

Born into a Brooklyn, Miss. farm family 63 years ago, Watson was working in the cotton fields by age 9. Many children of the Great Depression did that of necessity.

Harold "just loved agricul-



**FARM TEAM** — Southern Baptist missionary Harold Watson (right) of Hattiesburg kneels in a field at the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center with two of his closest Filipino colleagues, farm manager Rodrigo Calixtro (left) and associate director Warlito Laquihon. Flanking them: the hedgerows that make SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology), the farming method they pioneered, work so well in stopping upland soil erosion. (BP Photo by Don Rutledge)

ture," his mother recalled. "He loved the earth; he loved it all."

They couldn't keep him down on the farm. He sensed a call from God to foreign missions, and after earning several agriculture degrees, was appointed with his wife, Joyce, as an agricultural missionary to the Philippines in 1964.

The simple SALT method pioneered by Watson in the Philippines was tailor-made for the uplands, energized other Rural Life Center programs, and provided the momentum for creating a host of new ones.

SALT began to change thousands of lives and attract national notice after its introduction in 1978. In 1985 it brought Watson the Ramon Magsaysay Award

for International Understanding, often called the "Nobel Prize of Asia."

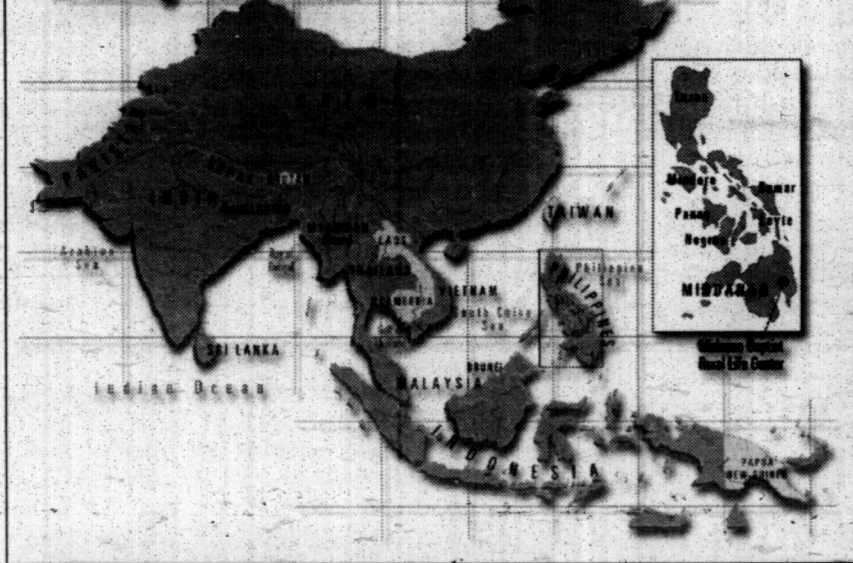
Suddenly, major organizations that had never heard of the tiny Rural Life Center expressed interest in SALT.

Today, this former "mom and pop" operation counts 86 workers at the main Rural Life Center and its multiple extensions.

Despite its growing international reputation, the center still doesn't look like much — just 50 acres or so of fields and barns, offices, bunkhouses, dormitories, and a few houses.

"We don't want it to look like a big American institution," Watson explains. "We want farmers to see what goes on here as something they can do."

## SALTING Asia's hills



**SALTING ASIA'S HILLS** — If SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology), pioneered by Southern Baptist missionary Harold Watson of Hattiesburg, were introduced in all the tropical uplands damaged by soil erosion, the lives of half a billion poor people could be improved, Watson estimates. (BP map by Stephanie Delgado)

## WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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## New Bible targets young athletes

Young aspiring athletes now have a "training manual" that can help them become winner in life as well as in sports.

The International Bible Society (IBS) has produced a brightly-packaged New International Version (NIV) Bible that utilizes an energetic sports theme to coach readers through Scripture and guide them in dealing with pressures encountered both on and off the field.

Special sections in the "Power for Competing" Bible explain traits needed for success, including commitment, determination, confidence, responsibility, and teamwork.

Olympic silver medalist Lavonna Florea-Martin and Major League pitcher Orel Hershiser are among the Christian sports champions sharing their testimonies in "Power for Competing."

"Power for Competing," designed as a follow-on to the popular "Path to Victory" sports New Testament from IBS, also features full-color sports photographs and was produced for use in sports camps and church youth programs.

"Power for Competing" is available now through bookstores carrying IBS materials.

## Looking back

10 years ago

Four ministers from different states who claim no affiliation with either faction of the controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention mail "A Pastoral Plea for Peace Among Southern Baptists," subtitled "No Lord but Christ, No Creed but the Bible" to churches across the convention.

2 years ago

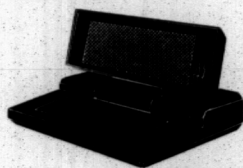
Fifth-grade GAs of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, make "Read Me-Color Me-Chew Me" booklets as a missions adventure project to be delivered to child patients at Hinds General Hospital in south Jackson. Anne McWilliams and Ramona Hill are leaders.

30 years ago

Presiding at all sessions of the State Baptist Student Union retreat, beginning April 25 at Sunflower Junior College, Moorhead, will be state BSU president Franklin E. Moak of the University of Mississippi. Appropriately 200 students are expected to register for the meeting.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Perkins Jr.**  
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# The 'Ellen' Opportunity

On April 30, "Ellen" TV sitcom star Ellen DeGeneres will finally come out of the closet to announce that Ellen Morgan, the character she portrays on the low-rated ABC/Disney production, is a lesbian.

In addition, DeGeneres has been appearing the past several weeks on all the "hip" tell-all shows to confess that, yes, she is a lesbian in real life and she feels so much better now that it's out in the open.

Is this a big deal? "Roseanne" and "Relativity" (both ABC/Disney) had already broken television prime-time barriers with passionate same-sex kisses.

Several prime-time shows have recurring homosexual characters, including "NYPD Blue" (again, ABC/Disney).

The number of lesbian weddings on prime-time has reached uncountable levels, including the #1 show in all of television, "Friends" (NBC).

All the coolest people think the "Ellen" coming-out is great. Oprah Winfrey will make a cameo appearance on the episode, as will actress Laura Dern, star of the movie "Jurassic Park"; Demi Moore, star of the movie "Striptease"; Oscar winner Billy Bob Thornton, director and star of the movie "Sling Blade"; and lesbian singers Melissa Etheridge and k.d. lang.

Yes, it is a big deal for several reasons.

First, it is yet another indication of the vulgarity of our modern American culture. For quite a few years, the networks have had to resort to the time-tested laughtrack so we would know such not-so-funny themes were actually meant to be comical.

As the broadcast networks continue to lose viewers by the millions to other forms of entertainment and amusement, they seem oblivious to the simple fact that the majority of Americans don't wish to be fed a steady diet of perversion.

"Roseanne" and "Relativity" have been cancelled due to low ratings, "NYPD Blue" is sinking, and "Ellen" has dropped to #30 in the ratings even before the lesbian episode.

There's a message there for any astute observer, but the networks seem to be missing it.

They simply insert more laughtracks.

Which speaks to the attitude these Hollywood types harbor toward us. That's why so many of them cynically refer to the area between New York City and Los Angeles as "flyover country" and describe Ellen's television coming-out as "brave and daring."

Secondly — and more importantly — the high profile afforded this "Ellen" episode gives us yet another opportunity as Christians to guide our children toward what's right (Matt. 7:13, John 10:9) and once again demonstrate to the non-Christian world that we know where to find the truth they so desperately seek (John 14:6).

The Bible is clear in repudiating homosexuality, just as it repudiates wickedness, envy, gossipers, and disobedient children (Romans 1:18-32).

Seize the "Ellen" opportunity, not to harangue all homosexuals in general but to share your witness one-on-one with individuals who need to hear the Gospel message.

We must not forget that while Jesus cast a harsh spotlight on sin and those who took pride in their sins, he also reached out to individuals where they were in life with the saving knowledge of who he was (John 4:1-26).

Talk is cheap. Put your witness where your mouth is and lead some people to Christ.

Having been involved several years ago in a local church ministry that helped homosexuals and lesbians struggling with



the conflict over their sexual compulsions and their Christianity, I am convinced that many homosexuals and lesbians want nothing more than to break away from their aberrant lifestyle and return to the Savior they know and love.

That's where we come in. God loves, and Jesus died for, the homosexual and the adulterer and the drunkard, as well as for the pious. That's the message we must take to a lost world.

It's okay for Christians to be heard in the secular world where these matters are concerned. We can even turn off the One-Eyed Monster on the evening of April 30.

If we chose to do so on a regular basis, we might reacquire ourselves with the great literature of the world or maybe — just maybe — with our families.

Regardless of what you decide about television, don't pass up the opportunity to share Christ with the real Ellens of this world. Don't be distracted by side issues and miss the opportunity.

Our Savior is depending on us.

**T**True Love Waits is an awesome phrase.

Everything that we do in life has consequences, whether good or bad.

True Love Waits because sex is so great that true love will wait and do it God's way.

If we sow seeds of sexual immorality, then we can be left with hurt, scars, even guilt, for the rest of our lives.

On the other hand, if you stay sexually pure until you see the ring, then you will get God's blessings and benefits in your life.

If you stay pure until marriage, you won't have to deal with the guilt and shame of telling your future wife or husband, and you won't have to worry about sexually transmitted diseases or possibly even becoming a mother or a father.

If you and your boyfriend or girlfriend really love each other you'll wait, because love is patient.

God is so great that he wants to provide us with the best marriage, and if possible, no haunting memories from the past.

The best thing I can tell my husband is, "I waited my whole

life just for you."

Now, people do make mistakes; that is just part of our sinful nature, but God allows us to turn from that sin and to commit from that day forward (until marriage) to stay sexually pure, which in God's eyes is still pure, like a born-again virgin.

That special person God has picked out for us may have already messed up, but to God, he or she is just as pure because when Jesus died on the cross, for our many sins, it included this one.

## GUEST OPINION:

### True love always waits

By Amanda Murphy, member  
First Church, Olive Branch



God always forgives, and his love never fails. Satan will tempt us and try us, time and time again.

Sexual intimacy is God's gift. Virginity is given by God and intended to be shared with your forever partner, but Satan mocks God's way because he hates it when we do what is right.

Satan comes to kill, steal, and destroy.

He will destroy us by trying to make us think that it is okay.

Satan is the author and creator

of immorality, and we can't let him win.

His schemes are sneaky and evil and he will try his best to throw them at us, but we just have to stand firm and let him know on whose ground we're standing.

If you ever hear a pressure line from a guy or girl that you're dating, it is not true love. True love never pressures.

We do not have the right to treat our bodies with sexual sin.

We are not our own. We were bought with a price and Jesus desires us to lead a holy life and not to be impure.

Being a virgin is such a leader position.

For one reason, you can turn and become like everyone else at any point and time, but they will never be able to become like you.

Virginity is a gift from God and it can only be given away once.

You are far more likely not to fall into sexual temptation if God is first priority in your life and you spend time with him daily.

Murphy is a tenth-grade student at Olive Branch High School, Olive Branch.





# Reccord announces he'll accept NAMB post

By Art Toalston  
Baptist Press

NORFOLK, Va. (BP)—Robert E. Reccord told the Norfolk, Va., congregation he leads April 20 he will accept the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) North American Mission Board (NAMB), if elected by the agency's trustees in their inaugural meeting June 19 in Dallas.

Reccord, 45, pastor of Norfolk's First Church, was joined in the Sunday evening service by Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, and Bill Hogue, a retired California Baptist executive who led the presidential search by a 13-member group of NAMB "incorporators."

"I know I must be obedient to what God is saying to me at this point," Reccord told the Norfolk congregation, according to "The Virginian-Pilot" daily newspaper April 21.

"Tonight I would just ask you a big favor: Please love us enough to grant us a release to take that step, because we feel like it's a step we must take," Reccord said.

Reccord also noted to the church, "God does not build his churches on men or women. God builds his churches on Christ, and that's why they stand."

Chapman, in his comments, said Southern Baptists "are dead serious about saying we want to lead North America to Jesus Christ. We're talking tonight about shaping the history of America."

Chapman invited church members to join Reccord and his wife, Cheryl, at the altar for a time of prayer and, according to the newspaper, people swarmed from the pews.

Reccord's wife, in earlier comments to the church during the service, said she had known three years ago her husband might be called to the new position.

Recounting a discussion they had of the SBC restructuring over lunch one day, she said, "At that table, on that day, it was as though God sat down and said, 'This is where you must be ready to go.' It startled me. Since that day, I've prayed, 'God, make me willing.'"

Reccord's predecessor at First Church, Norfolk — Ken Hemphill — also left the church to lead an SBC agency, Southwestern Seminary in Texas.

Reccord resigned in March as chairman of the task force guiding SBC restructuring, acknowledging at that time he was the probable NAMB nominee.

NAMB is a key facet of the SBC restructuring, highlighting the desire stated in the "Covenant for a New Century" passed by messengers to the 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta to reach "the United States and Canada for Christ, using every appropriate means of evangelization and church planting."

If approved in June, the NAMB budget for 1997-98 will be 22.79% of the SBC Cooperative Program budget, or more than \$33 million.

It will be second only in size in the SBC budget to the International Mission Board (formerly the Foreign Mission Board) with its 50% share, more than \$74 million, of the budget.

NAMB will have nearly 5,000 missionaries in cooperation with 41 state conventions/fellowships and 1,200 associations.

A second source of funding for the new agency is the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions.



THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST  
*Record*

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## 'True Love Waits' catches Coast wave

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Over 750 youths and sponsors from numerous Gulf Coast churches gathered at First Church, Long Beach, for a True Love Waits (TLW) rally on April 18 — the night before the senior prom.

It was part of a strategy developed by Richard Strebeck, minister of youth at First Church, Long Beach, and Brenda Davis, associate for education and ministries at Gulf Coast Association, Gulfport, to bring TLW to more churches of the association and the Gulf Coast area.

It was timed just before the prom to help teens remember to keep their commitment, Strebeck said.

TLW is an international campaign designed to challenge teen-agers and college students to remain sexually abstinent until marriage. It was launched by the Baptist Sunday School Board in April 1993.



ONE WAY — Ben Dewberry, a student at Samford University, Birmingham, leads music for the April 18 True Love Waits Rally at First Church, Long Beach.

To date, hundreds of thousands of young adults have signed covenant cards stating: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate, and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship."

"I think TLW is great," said Rachel Bushart, a junior at Long Beach High School and a member of First Church, Long Beach. She plans to major in elementary education at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

"As teen-agers, we need something positive so we won't be overcome by the temptations of this world," she said.

Bushart first made the TLW commitment in the seventh grade, and she has signed a commitment card each year since then.

Recently, her parents gave her a TLW ring at a special Sunday church service as a symbol of her commitment.

"It made me feel really special," Bushart said. "It (the TLW commitment) is something more teens should do," she said.

Daniel Perryman agrees. Though Perryman is only 12 years old and a sixth grader at Long Beach Middle School, he has a good grasp of the significance of the TLW commitment.

"TLW is a great program. It is a way to stop a problem before it really starts," he said.

Perryman is not one to just allow the future to happen. He plans ahead.

"I had already planned on being (sexually) abstinent before I learned of TLW," Perryman said. "but this really helped me."

Perryman's mother also gave him a TLW ring which he proudly wears.

"I was talking to a friend who doesn't go to my church and she asked what my ring was. She said, 'Is it a TLW ring?' I said 'Yes.' It's nice to see that (TLW) is getting around," he said.

Four local ministers of youth wrote Bible study lessons on TLW themes for distribution to area churches as a build-up to the rally, according to Davis.

The four youth ministers are: Strebeck of First Church, Long Beach; Russ Moore of Bay Vista Church, Biloxi; Tommy Vowell of Handsboro Church, Gulfport; and Clinton

White of Bayou View Church, Gulfport.

The lessons, printed and distributed by the Gulf Coast Association, are character studies, Strebeck said.

The rally featured a vocal performance



TLW FANS — Jamie Arms (left), Rachel Bushart (center), and sponsor Nancy Freeman, all members of First Church, Long Beach, were among 750 youth and adults at Gulf Coast Association's True Love Waits rally on Friday, April 18 at First Church, Long Beach. (Photos by Carl M. White)

by Mississippian Becca Jackson. Jackson's husband, Randall, is pastor of Tangipahoa Church, Pike Association.

The rally also featured the Covenant Players, an international repertoire drama ministry team based in California.

At the commitment time, 395 students signed TLW commitment cards, most of them for the first time, and attached them to a wall on the stage area.

In addition, there were 6 professions of faith, along with 47 other decisions.

"This was the most tremendous thing we have done," Davis said. "The Lord tremendously blessed us. It surpassed all of our expectations."

"It is amazing how you work toward a dream or vision God has given you, and then you see it happen," Strebeck said.

"I was amazed at the response during the commitment time," he said.

For more information on True Love Waits, contact Wes Pegues at the Discipleship Training Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, Ms. 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1451.



# Pedophiles cruise Internet 'chat rooms'

CLEVELAND (BP) — Paul Brown Jr. convinced teenage girls he was a young boy in need of affection — even though the 47-year-old man weighed 400 pounds.



He met them in on-line "chat rooms" and persuaded one 12-year-old girl to make pornographic videos. Police searched his apartment and found corre-

spondence from 10 other girls. "You don't know who you're talking to," said Colin Gabriel Hatcher.

Hatcher is with Cyber Angels, an Internet safety organization which gathers evidence for police organizations and last year collected 5,000 documents for investigations against pedophiles.

In recent months, the FBI conducted 207 searches and made 66 felony arrests in a sweep against child pornography.

"One cyber patrol member reported 500 cases of child porn being swapped in one afternoon," Hatcher said.

The nation's escalating problem with cyber porn starts innocently in most families: You get a computer for your family. You join an on-line service for access to the Internet. You expect educational opportunities.

Children drift into on-line group conversations. They meet people from all over the world. Strangers can hide in each encounter.

"It's like leaving a child in the middle of a red light district," Hatcher said. "They think they're chatting with other kids."

Software can offer different levels of protection, either filtering the information from the computer or rating the material before it arrives.

"Christian Computing" magazine recommends "Net Nanny." It uses the filter method. Parents choose which web sites can be visited. It allows no other access to the Internet and even records attempts made.

"Internet World" magazine gave its highest rating to Cyber Patrol, a rating system that uses a combination approach.

In an interactive computer chat, an adult on the prowl either "tries to get personal information or talk in private," he said. "Kids get sexually propositioned."

Several months ago, a 14 year-old-girl from Brighton, N.Y., ran away with Brooker Maltais, a 22-year-old airman stationed in Nebraska. They met on the Internet. Nebraska police spotted the pair and said the girl appeared to be with the man by choice.

"We have a whole new avenue of opportunity for the pedophile," said Bruce Taylor.

"They have characteristically gone where the children are and where the parents least expect them to be," Taylor pointed out.

Taylor is president of the National Law Center for Children and Families, a legal assistance organization.

Parents can increase the protection of their children with several tips:

- ◆ Keep the computer in a public room where you can watch the activity.

- ◆ Remind children to never give out personal information like names, phone numbers, or addresses.

- ◆ Report suspicious conversations to the on-line service or police.

- ◆ Use chat rooms that are closely supervised. The Cyber Angels recommend several like Talk City, Super Chat, and Another Net.

"The pedophiles think of themselves as being invisible right now.

"They have infected the Internet with the worse kind of virus," Taylor said.

## Expert urges sharing Gospel with New Agers

DALLAS (ABP) — New Age religion, including movements like the Heaven's Gate cult, is "intellectual Velcro dragged across the great religious traditions of the world picking up odd bits of theological lint as it goes," said a Baptist expert on the subject.

Mark Thames, pastor of Lower Greenville Baptist Community Church in Dallas, gave the definition while discussing the Heaven's Gate mass suicide in late March.

"Our consumer approach to religion means that we have sitting out on the shelf bits and pieces of all the different beliefs there are in the world.

Some are in packets, but you can buy them separately, too," said Thames, an interfaith-witness associate for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"You can pick up a bit off the Christian shelf, and some off the Judaism shelf, and another part off the Hindu shelf," he continued.

"You can make your own package to suit yourself depending on your personal preference, whether it be Celestine Prophecy, miracles, angels, nature, bits and pieces of the Bible," he said, adding that one news report compared concocting religion to making soup.

"Many Americans today think of churches as religious-services providers, and that is why the mega churches are so popular.

"People like them for the same reasons they like Sam's (Clubs). They are big ware-

houses and they offer lots of services under one roof for people to pick from," Thames said.

Churches have done "superficial things" like adding entertainment-oriented worship services and downplaying education, he said.

"In our day, the church has been so preoccupied with minor distinctions within and among themselves that they have not adequately articulated the dif-

ference between us and the larger culture," Thames added.

"The problem is not so much that there are people out there like (Heaven's Gate leader Marshall Herff) Applewhite with loony beliefs, but that there are so many people in the churches who have no doctrinal moorings or biblical base to provide an anchor of authority for them," he said.

Despite the downside of the

New Age, there are "tremendous opportunities if we will construct a post-modern Christianity that blends science, mystery, history, philosophy, and all of those things in an exciting way" which will touch the lives of people, Thames said.

"We have an opportunity we haven't had in decades to talk about sin, the Bible, God and Jesus," he said.

## M.H. Todd dies April 13

Funeral services were held April 15 in Huntingdon, Tenn., for M.H. Todd, 77, father of Mississippi College President Howell W. Todd of Clinton.

The elder Todd died unexpectedly on April 13 at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis. The cause of death was not immediately released.

In addition to his son, Todd is survived by his wife of 59 years, Estelle Tubbs Todd of Clarksburg, Tenn. Howell W. Todd can be contacted at the Office of the President, Mississippi College, P.O. Box 4186, Clinton, MS 39058.

## New state BSU officers elected



The state Baptist Student Union (BSU) executive committee for 1997-98 includes (from left) Bruce Brady, BSU director, Co-Lin Community College - director advisor; Don Gann, pastor of Wyndale Church, Terry - pastor advisor; Mitch Walker of Shaw USM senior - president; Bradley Roberson of Ripley, Northeast Community College; Jill Stockstill of Picayune, MSU sophomore; Greg Browning of Kosciusko, UM junior; Christy Pearson of Preston, MUW junior - secretary; Emily Pate of Woodland, Blue Mountain College junior - vice president. (Photo by Carl M. White)



# Final 'FMB' missionaries are appointed

RICHMOND, Va. — Mississippian Mark L. Mathis and Whitney L. Johnson Mathis have joined the nearly 4,200 Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) workers sharing Christ in 127 countries among 336 ethnic people groups.

The Mathises were among 63 people appointed by the FMB April 8 during a service at the State House Convention Center in Little Rock, Ark. — the last group appointed by FMB before it becomes International Mission Board (IMB) in June.

The new missionaries will fill diverse job assignments from starting churches to using construction, education, and business as tools of ministry.

In 1996 FMB missionaries helped lead 283,674 people to

Christ and baptism.

They and their overseas partners started 2,367 churches and reported a record 4.1 million members in 39,876 churches overseas.

The Mathises will live in South Africa, where he will start and develop churches and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Born in Lake City, Fla., Mark Mathis is the son of Leon Houston and Inez Mathis of Starkville. He also lived in Starkville and considers it his hometown.

He received the bachelor of science degree from Mississippi State University in Starkville and the master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Other newly-appointed missionaries with Mississippi con-

nections include:

◆ John H. Crocker and Suzanne E. Laramore Crocker, missionaries to Togo.

He will start and develop churches and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

John Crocker served as pastor of Cornerstone Fellowship Baptist Church and Grays Creek Church, both in Hernando.

The Crockers credit Immanuel Church, Olive Branch, as instrumental in their Christian growth.

◆ J. Kent Shirley and L. Elaine Covington Shirley, missionary associates to Bolivia.

He will promote religious education and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Kent Shirley was pastor of

Cleary Church, Florence, and Walker Hill Church, Brandon.

He also was an account executive and a sales agent in Jackson.

◆ Charles P. "Charley" and Okema F. "Okie" Rempel, missionaries to Trinidad and Tobago.

He will start and develop churches and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Charley Rempel pastored Big Level Church, Wiggins, and Okie Rempel attended Jefferson Davis Junior College in Biloxi.

With 15.4 million members, the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest evangelical denomination in the United States, and the FMB is the largest evangelical missionary-sending agency.

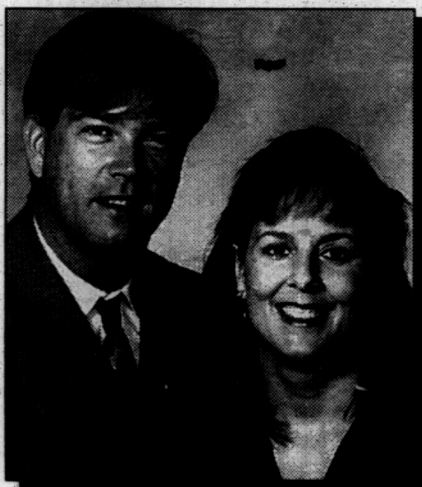
## Trustees OK renovations at FMB

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Foreign Mission Board trustees approved spending \$6.4 million for building renovation and improvement to the agency's Richmond, Va., facilities during their April 7-9 meeting in Little Rock, Ark.

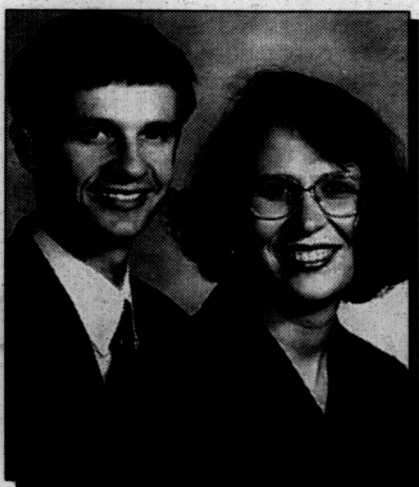
To cover the cost, they will use some \$2.25 million from a reserve fund and the rest from the board's general funds.

The board uses no Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds for stateside operation, so none of those funds will be used.

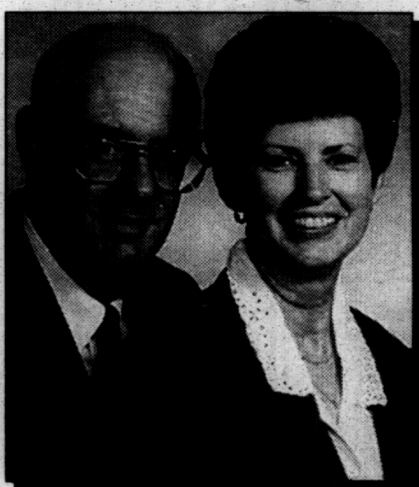
The renovation will squeeze more usable space out of the building's existing square footage, as well as upgrade and modernize the facilities.



Mark and Whitney Mathis



John and Suzanne Crocker



Kent and Elaine Shirley



Charley and Okie Rempel

## FMB trustees approve restructure principles

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Foreign Mission Board (FMB) trustees and administrators agreed on key changes to guide a massive revitalization of the agency's overseas operations during their April 7-9 meeting in Little Rock, Ark.

Trustees decided to divide the world into 14 regions designed "for growth and kingdom impact," installing "visionary" leadership in each region.

The board hopes to begin implementing the new structure by July 1 and have most of it in place by the end of the year.

The restructure will coincide with the agency's name change to International Mission Board (IMB), scheduled to take effect during the June 17-19 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

One of the restructure's key components calls for integrating Cooperative Services International (CSI) work into all 14 regions and, "as appropriate," using its approaches to unreached people groups in each region.

CSI is the FMB's humanitarian arm, which has worked in areas of the world where traditional missionary methods were unwelcome. Under the new plan, most regions will have their own CSI-type components.

Citing sensitive personnel and security issues, trustees convened an executive session for one hour April 8.

Then, after a public discussion

the next day, they voted to approve a document titled, "New Directions for International Mission Board, SBC."

That document included appendixes outlining geographical boundaries of the 14 regions, job descriptions for regional leadership, and a job description for an associate vice president for strategy coordination and mobilization who will guide the CSI-type components.

Trustees also authorized the Overseas Restructure Task Force, which includes a provision for the current 10 area directors who oversee work in nine geographical areas and CSI to vacate their positions during the transition to IMB.

Each will be considered for reassignment to any of the new positions, but to be named to one, each must be nominated by the task force.

### New FMB regions listed with countries, personnel

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — A list of countries where Southern Baptist missionaries or representatives serve in each of the 14 new regions adopted April 8 by trustees of the Foreign Mission Board follows:

#### Central and Eastern Europe

Total field personnel: 225

Albania Belarus  
Bosnia Bulgaria  
& Herzegovina Croatia  
Czech Republic Estonia  
Hungary Latvia  
Lithuania Moldova  
Macedonia Romania  
Poland Serbia  
Russia Ukraine  
Slovakia

#### Western Europe

Total field personnel: 261

Austria Belgium  
France Germany  
Italy Netherlands  
Norway Portugal  
Spain United Kingdom

#### Middle East and North Africa

Total field personnel: 318

Chad Egypt  
Ethiopia Israel  
Jordan Lebanon  
Morocco West Bank/Gaza  
United Arab Emirates  
Yemen

#### Central and Southern Asia

Total field personnel: 214

Bangladesh India  
Kazakhstan Nepal  
Pakistan Sri Lanka

#### East Asia

Total field personnel: 349

China Hong Kong  
Macau Taiwan

#### Southeast Asia and Oceania

Total field personnel: 304

Australia Fiji  
Indonesia Malaysia  
New Zealand Singapore  
Thailand

#### The Caribbean Basin

Total field personnel: 293

Antigua and Barbuda

#### Aruba

Belize

Colombia

Dominican Rep.

Grenada

Guyana

Netherlands

Saint Lucia

Trinidad/Tobago

St. Vincent/Grenadines

Western Pacific

Total field personnel: 398

Japan

Philippines

South Korea

Eastern South America

Total field personnel: 347

Brazil

Uruguay

Paraguay

Western South America

Total field personnel: 289

Argentina

Chile

Peru

Bolivia

Ecuador

Middle America

Total field personnel: 312

Costa Rica

El Salvador

#### Barbados

Bermuda

Dominica

French Guiana

Guadeloupe

Haiti

Antilles

Suriname

Venezuela

#### Guatemala

Mexico

Panama

West Africa

Total field personnel: 336

Benin

Cote d'Ivoire

Equatorial Guinea

Ghana

Guinea-Bissau

Mali

Nigeria

Sierra Leone

Togo

Southern Africa

Total field personnel: 254

Angola

Lesotho

Malawi

Mozambique

Reunion

South Africa

Zambia

Botswana

Madagascar

Mauritius

Namibia

Seychelles

Swaziland

Zimbabwe

Eastern Africa

Total field personnel: 233

Burundi

Kenya

Rwanda

Tanzania

Uganda





## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

**Michael O'Brien**  
in concert at  
Grace Memorial Baptist Church  
Gulfport, MS  
**May 17, 1997**  
**7:30 p.m.**

Tickets: \$7.00  
reservations must be  
made before  
May 1, 1997

Reserve by phone:  
(GMBC) 863-5096  
Reserve via check by  
mail: Grace Memorial  
Baptist Church 2301 23rd  
Ave., Gulfport, MS 39501

### PRAYERS WERE DIFFERENCE

Editor:

On February 13, I was diagnosed with Guillian-Barre Syndrome and was hospitalized for 28 days. During this time, so many Mississippi Baptist prayed for me. Their prayers made such a tremendous difference. I have returned to the office on a limited basis and I preached on Easter Sunday.

I want to use this means of saying "Thank You" to so many who prayed, called, and sent cards during this time.

Mickey Dalrymple, pastor  
Fairview Church, Columbus

### SS LITERATURE FEMINIST

Editor:

We were disturbed to read in "Word" magazine (March 29) where the editors of the New International Version (NIV) Bible and Zondervon Publishing Company have capitulated to the feminist agenda by publishing a new NIV Bible that is gender-neutral. But we were outraged to see the same thing in our own Sunday School literature "Explore the Bible" series, (April, May, June). Once our denominational concern is to be politically correct and to meet an agenda other than God's, then we as a denomination have moved to a place we do not want to be because we believe we have then moved out of God's will.

It seems that Southern Baptists with their emphasis on the inerrancy of the whole word of God would have been the last to attempt to conform to this world. This move, albeit apparently small and insignificant, places us in the perilous position of deliberately disobeying our Lord's command in Romans 12:2 to "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Another disturbing thing in the survey and possibly even more subtle is the omission of teaching the fall of man as thereby eliminating the need for a savior and very neatly doing away with the entire heart of the Bible—Jesus Christ, the sacrificial lamb of the world.

We have been Southern Baptists for over 40 years and for the first time, we are ashamed and appalled at the direction our denomination is moving.

Wade and Lovie McGlothlin  
French Camp

### BUILDING HELP NEEDED

Editor:

Calvary Church of Las Cruces, N. M. is planning a God-sized task: adding 18,000 square feet of classroom and office space debt-free. This can only be accomplished with the help of volunteer labor. The construction begins in August and will last approximately 18 months. If you or your church

would like to be a part of this undertaking, please call the church office at (505) 522-7900, or write to Calvary Church, 1800 S. Locust St., Las Cruces, NM 88001. Full RV hood-ups available on site.

Mike Stone  
Calvary Building Committee  
Las Cruces, N.M.

### THANKS FOR SUPPORT

Editor:

With the action of the Legislature and the signature of the Governor on March 27, authority was approved for issuance of bonds that will allow the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) to purchase for \$1,000,000 the property of Clarke College from the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC).

The Clarke Special Committee wishes to express appreciation to Randy Hendrix, DMH executive director, and his staff for their professional manner and cooperation in

meeting the requirements of MBC.

The committee also wishes to thank Rep. Bobby Moody of Louisville for his continuous support and his heart for the needs of people served by such special facilities.

Sen. Terry Burton, Rep. Raymond Comans, Rep. Johnny Stringer, and other legislators were instrumental in passage of the measure. Newton Mayor Hamp Beatty and city officials worked hard to ensure that the property's future owner would be compatible with the city.

The gracious cooperation of the active Clarke College alumni in this most difficult process brought out the strong Christian character of the Clarke spirit.

Mississippi Baptists must be thanked for their patience during this five-year process.

Everything belongs to God, including this institution that has educated so many preachers, missionaries, and Christians. The new direction

(continued on page 7)



ALL SIZES  
SALES AND RENTALS

### CHURCH BUSES

#1 MANUFACTURER  
COMPETITIVE PRICING

SOUTHEASTERN BUS CO.

CLINTON, MS

1-800-423-9826

1-601-924-1982

### They Are Not One of Us!

A new family drove onto the church parking lot on Sunday morning. They had only lived in town for a few months. Things were not going well in their marriage, so they thought they would give church and God a try. It had been years since they had been in church. They felt a bit afraid as they walked to the church entrance. The question that was on their mind was, "How will these people respond to me and will we be accepted in this place?"

They entered the Worship Center and no one spoke. When the preacher welcomed the visitors, he asked everyone who was "new" to stay seated while the members stood and "looked down on them." They felt so out of place as they watched people talking to friends, but no one talked to them. After the service was over all the people seemed to be busy in their own little groups. They seemed to love one another but no one seemed to notice them. As they drove away from church they carried with them this feeling, "We guess we just didn't fit in."

I pray it wasn't your church they visited.



Dr. Jim Butler, Pastor  
Trinity Baptist Church  
Southaven, Mississippi

## Discover a Mission Field in Dallas

Dallas Baptist Association consists of more than 430 Southern Baptist congregations.

Every Sunday we worship in 37 different languages with groups.

More than one million unchurched people and thousands more who are alienated with non-Christian faiths live in this great city.

Will you come and help us reach them for Jesus?

Block Parties  
Street Evangelism  
Door-To-Door Witnessing

**CrossOver Dallas**  
**June 13-14, 1997**

For more information, call HMB Church Growth and Associational Evangelism Department at 770 410-6246 or the Dallas Baptist Association at 214 324-2803.

**HMB**

HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

April 24, 1997

HouseTops is a **Baptist Record** supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's **Office of Communication**.

## ANNUAL SPRING RETREAT FOR CHAPLAINS SET

The Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association will hold its annual Spring Retreat on May 9-10, 1997, at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian, Mississippi.



James E. Carter, "Maintaining Spirituality in a Midst of Changing Paradigms."

Before coming to the Louisiana State Convention, Carter was pastor of University Baptist Church, Fort Worth. He has pastored churches in Texas and Louisiana. He is the author of numerous books, articles and curriculum materials.

The retreat will begin with a fellowship at 5 p.m. on Friday, May 9, followed by a seafood dinner at 5:30 p.m. The retreat will adjourn after lunch on Saturday, May 10.

All endorsed Baptist Chaplains are invited to attend. For more information, call Richard Brogan, Missions Extension Department, MBCB at 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.

## The Suit Project

### What is it?

For over 33 years Baptists in Mississippi have enjoyed sending new suits to the pastors in new work areas. This is our way of letting the pastors in these areas of Southern Baptist life know that we care about and support them in their work.

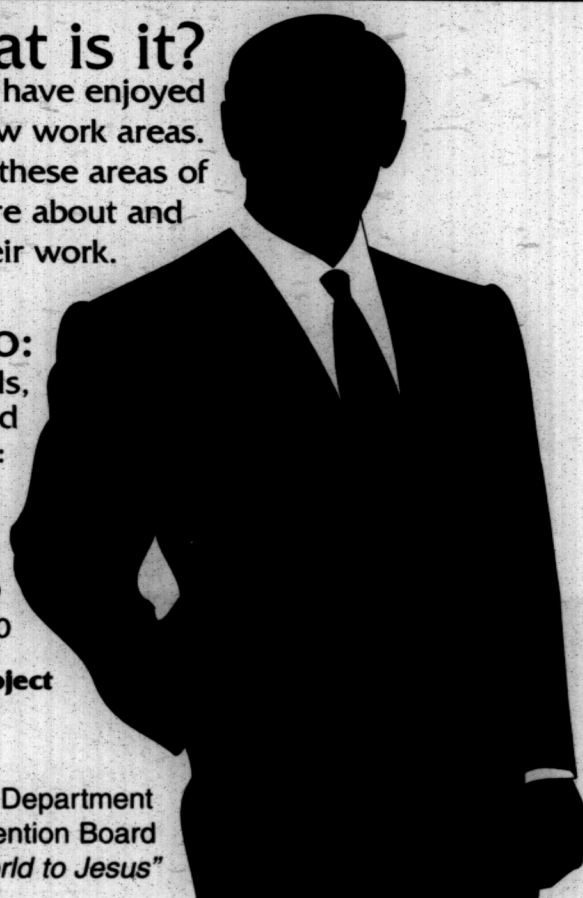
### What you can do:

Men's Ministries groups, individuals, churches, etc., can send their gifts payable to:

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
Attention: Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

**Designate on your check: Suit Project**

Sponsored by the Brotherhood Department  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"



## 1997 STATE SINGLES RETREAT

## "Getting On Track"

GULFSHORE BAPTIST ASSEMBLY • MAY 24 - 26

### Conference Highlights

#### Conference Preacher:

Ron Hill, Trinity Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex.  
11 years as minister with singles

#### Mini Concerts:

Renee S. Scheidt, China Grove, N. C. (three-time recording artist)  
Pam Bell, Bogalusa, La. (recording artist)  
Paul Stupka, Tupelo, Miss. (contemporary recording artist)

#### Surf Sounds:

Vicki Pilecki, Greenwood, with guitar by Wayne Pinkerton, Greenville

Scafood Banquet Ice Cream Fellowship T-Shirt

SUNDAY TRACK OPPORTUNITIES: New Orleans, Coastal Experiences, Canoeing, Ship Island, and much more!

#### COST

\$87.60 (Unit A - two in a room)  
\$81.30 (Unit C - four in a room)

#### SEND TO:

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street  
Pass Christian, MS 39571

## GULFSHORE MUSIC LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE JULY 10-12, 1997

A conference designed with the leaders of your church's music program in mind. Come and learn new and unique ways of enlarging the music ministry where you serve.

Cost: Registration: 10 a.m.  
"A" Unit - \$84.30 Orientation: 12:45 p.m.  
"C" Unit - \$78 Handbell Auditions: 3 p.m.





## It's Time for Fun at Central Hills

**LAD & DAD WEEKEND CAMP**  
for campers in grades 1-3 and their dads

June 27-28	Total Cost:
July 11-12	\$26 per camper
	\$52 for a lad & dad

**R.A./CHALLENGERS RESIDENT CAMP**  
for campers in grades 4-12

June 16-20	Total Cost: \$95/camper
June 23-27	includes: registration fee,
July 7-11	crafts fee, snack fee,
July 14-18	lodging, meals & limited
July 21-25	supplemental insurance
July 28-Aug. 1	

**Royal Ambassadors and Challengers  
SUMMER CAMP 1997**

for more information, contact:  
Central Hills Baptist Retreat, P.O. Box 723, Kosciusko, MS 39090-0723  
601/289-9730

## M & M Day

*This year WMU is sponsoring the first-ever celebration of missions just for preschoolers. On May 3 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Mom and Me Day will be held at Camp Garaywa in Clinton.*

*This event will allow Mission Friends and their moms to experience missions through games, songs, crafts, activities and more!*

*The cost is only \$3 per person which includes all activities and lunch!*

Please complete the registration form below and mail to  
WMU - M & M Day, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

### Registration Form - Mom & Me Day - Camp Garaywa

Mother's name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no. \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w)

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$3 x # of persons \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total)

**Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**

## Discipling the Family

### FAMILY ENRICHMENT WEEK

Featuring the Richardson families leading in worship:

- Rev. Jay Richardson, FBC, Greenville
- Rev. Gary Richardson, FBC, West Point
- Rev. Ian Richardson, Lake City, Fla.
- Dr. and Mrs. James Richardson, Madison

### Family Conferences:

- "TeamKID" - Preschoolers/Children
- Mini-Centrifuge - Mickey Little, NOBTS; Ronney Jo Webb, Laurel
- Couples - Jay Richardson
- Men's Ministry - Gary Richardson
- Single Parenting/Women's Ministry  
- led by Pam Bell, Bogalusa, La.
- Power of Prayer - James Richardson

### Family Perspectives

- Family Feud
- Unbound drama team from Hattiesburg
- Magic from the Battle family, Brandon
- Morning Watch
- Barbecue Supper
- Whole "free" day
- Ice cream and watermelon fellowships

**Registration: 1:30 p.m. (Tuesday, July 1)**

**Departure: 10 a.m. (Saturday, July 5)**





## In Christ: Making a Difference



Gulfshore Baptist Assembly,  
Pass Christian

### **SPEAKERS:**

Bill Baker  
May 20-23

Keith Carpenter  
May 26-28

John Yates  
May 29-31

For more information,  
please call the  
Discipleship and  
Family Ministry  
Department of the  
Mississippi Baptist  
Convention Board  
at 1-800-748-1651  
or 968-3800 in  
Jackson.

## 1997 GROWING CHURCHES FOR Tomorrow

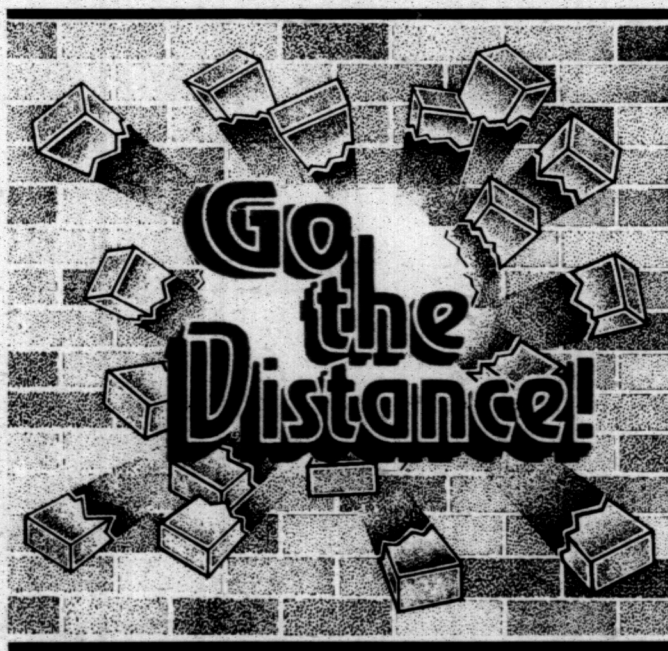
As easy as

An Exciting New  
Format That  
Includes Three Great  
Weekends To  
Choose From!

1  
2  
3

July 17-19 • July 24-26 • July 31-Aug. 2

Each weekend has a separate emphasis. The first deals with Missions and Ministry. The second focuses on Bible Study. The third concentrates on Discipleship and Family Ministry. Don't miss this excellent opportunity for your organizational leaders to receive instruction in the latest training methods and materials. Please encourage attendance at one, two, or all three conferences.



**S**uper Summer Mississippi is for the young person who is a mature and responsible Christian leader. Mississippi College is the host for Super Summer, July 21-25. Young people attending Super Summer Mississippi spend approximately 20 hours in evangelism and discipleship training. Quality youth leaders from our state lead our youth in study. Youth are trained in how to share their faith, how to have a quiet time, how to memorize scripture, how to find God's will for their lives, and more. They are also challenged and equipped to utilize their talents to penetrate their culture for Christ in creative and effective ways. Throughout Super Summer young people are encouraged to use the freedom they have in Christ to change the world.

## Super Summer '97

with Mike Curry

**July 21-25**

Mississippi College, Clinton

### **Financial Requirements**

The total cost for Super Summer during the registration period is \$140 per student and adult; amount includes food, housing in the school dormitory, materials, and T-shirt.

### **Guidelines for all SS candidates**

1. Demonstrates leadership qualities and is a growing Christian.
2. Faithful involvement in Worship, Sunday School, and Wednesday night youth activities.
3. Complete at least one level of a discipleship study (i.e. Survival Kit, DiscipleYouth, DiscipleNow...).
4. Memorized a minimum of 10 scripture verses relating to discipleship, evangelism, or a disciple study.
5. Share their personal testimony with the youth group.
6. Share the Gospel with at least one person this year.
7. Completed at least the 8th grade in 1997, but not yet in college.
8. Agree to attend all SS sessions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to:

**Discipleship & Family Ministry Dept., MBCB**  
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

### **Request For Registration Packet**

**REGISTRATION BEGINS APRIL 15 AND ENDS JUNE 30** - All applications received after June 30 will be subject to a \$25 late fee. Applications received after July 7 may be refused. Space is limited.

## In Concert

**April 27, 1997**  
**FBC, Laurel**  
**6 p.m.**

Randy Turner  
Pastor

Jimmy Little  
Min. of Music

# ONE VOICE

A music/drama ensemble of the Church Music Dept., MBCB  
*Sharing the Song of Jesus*



Pray this day for...

April 25-May 8, 1997

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"The goal of my spiritual life is such close identification with Jesus Christ that I will always hear God and know that God always hears me."

-Oswald Chambers

Life Commitment Sunday (CAPM Emphasis). In Russia the open door there continues to be hampered by visa problems. Please intercede for the government servants in the Foreign Ministry Office. Recently, two new journeymen received their visas, but to the wrong cities.

Pray for Mrs. Ha, a new believer in South Korea who wants to be active in church activities. Her mother-in-law is a Buddhist and is against Mrs. Ha's new life. Pray for her to have strength as she seeks to witness to her family, find opportunities for Christian fellowship and growth, and endure this time of testing her faith.

Pray for furloughing Baptist representatives in Lebanon, Ed and Grace Philipps, as they say goodbye to family and friends in the U.S. and return to serve in media work. As they step back into the Arab world and spend time with Muslim neighbors in their building, pray that relationships would develop and lead to a sharing of the Good News.

Pray for Pastor Wade Holmes, his family and the members of Faith Baptist Church in Whitehorse, Yukon (Canada). They have voted to start all over as a new church plant. Pray for them as they work diligently to reach the people in Whitehorse.

Begin now to pray for a "witness walk" planned for the Rose Hill community during the "Corpus Christi" holiday on May 29. This will involve members from all the Baptist churches in Grenada, Winward Islands, fanning out across the Rose Hill community and attempting to share the gospel in every house and inviting the people to the open-air service to follow.

Missionaries Hawk and Carol Hawkins write: "On March 26, the Chilean Bible Society unveiled a new Bible in the Mapudungun language of the local Indian tribe named Mapuches. There are about one million Mapuches in our area of southern Chile. Pray that these people will accept the Lord now that they have the gospel in their own language."

Judy Rice in Anchorage, AK is involved in church and community ministries. Pray that the students in her citizenship class will learn more about how much God loves them.

On April 5, missionary Stan Stepleton and a deaf mission team did a survey in the town of Azua, Dominican Republic. Pray that they will be able to identify deaf individuals who will be receptive to God's message.

National Day of Prayer sponsored by Dobson's Focus on the Family. For Music Mississippi; Hinds Community College, Raymond; 9 am, 1st-11:30 am, 3rd, sponsored by Church Music.

Continue praying for Max Love and his family as they walk through difficult days with Max's cancer. Max was external team chairman for the church growth study in Peru. Pray that God would guide the committee as the members continue to work and that He would speak to each one concerning his plans for the future.

For State Handbell Festival, Mississippi College; 6:30 pm, 25th-1 pm, 26th, sponsored by Church Music. For Missionary Parents Fellowship Meeting; Camp Garaywa; 4:30 pm, 25th-3 pm, 26th, sponsored by WMU.

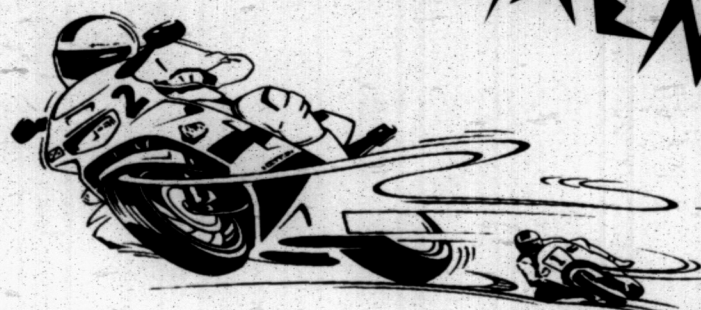
For State Speakers Tournament; Alta Woods BC, Jackson; 10 am-noon, sponsored by Discipleship & Family Ministry. For State Bible Drill Selection Tournament; Alta Woods BC, Jackson; 1-3 pm, sponsored by Discipleship & Family Ministry.

For Parenting Conferences; Temple BC, Hattiesburg/FBC, Tupelo; 6:30 pm, 2nd-11:45 am, 3rd, sponsored by Equipping Team.

For Lad/Crusader Day; Central Hills Retreat; 9 am-3 pm, sponsored by Brotherhood. For Mission Friends Fair; Camp Garaywa; 10 am-2 pm.

# Gulfshore Youth Weeks '97

## 2<sup>nd</sup> THE EXTREME



As we follow Christ, we must be willing to go the distance if we are to become like Him.

Purpose: To use creative Bible study, special interest studies, fun recreation, and evangelistic celebrations in a retreat setting to challenge youth to live for God.

Cost: \$128 per person. A \$30 deposit per person is required with registration. This is a Youth Camp experience your church can afford and it's as close as Mississippi Baptists' own Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian, Miss.

Registration: Begins on March 1, 1997. This should be sent to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571. For registration information, call 601-452-7261.

Information: For program information, call Mark Lott or Jim Didlake at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800.

CAMP DATE	CAMP PASTOR	CAMP MUSICIAN
June 2-6	James Lewis FBC, New Albany	Kevin Williams Columbus
June 6-10	Daniel Hawthorne FBC, Coffeeville	Kevin Williams Columbus
June 10-14	Greg Warnock Tate Street BC Corinth	Kevin Williams Columbus
June 14-18	Jason Bird Fifteenth Avenue BC Meridian	Heith Wilkinson Yazoo City
June 19-23	Rob Boyd FBC, Clinton	Kevin Williams Columbus
June 23-27	Gary Permenter Mt. Vernon BC Columbus	Kevin Williams Columbus

# HOUSE TOPS



for the property means that people will be helped in a different way, but God is still in control. He has provided a purpose that will continue to honor Clarke College.

The instructions of MBC have been carried out, and the Clarke property will be used in a manner compatible with the committee's instructions. Thank you, Lord!

Larry Otis, chairman  
Clarke Special Committee  
Tupelo

## ILLUSTRATIONS DISTORT

Editor:

Why would the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) allow the publication of illustrations that clearly are not in accord with God's Word?

In the SBC's "Open Windows" (Jan/Feb/Mar/97) are two copies of an artist's drawings, both of which distort the truth.

One has Jesus before Pilate, according to John 19:5 (quoted on the illustration). But Jesus is neither wearing the crown of thorns nor the purple robe mentioned in the verse. The robe in the illustration is mostly white and yellow and a faint orchid.

The other has Jesus on the cross, apparently depicting John 19:30 (printed on the illustration). Not only is Jesus' head not bowed, contrary to the verse, but the spikes holding Jesus to the cross are in his wrists, not his hands. The

inspired gospel writers did not give the crucifixion's gory details but John wrote three times in John 20 strongly implying that something had been done to Jesus' hands (not his wrists). Verse 20: Jesus "shewed unto them his hands." Verse 25: Thomas told them, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails...." Verse 27: Jesus told Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands...."

The Board's artist apparently did not know (or check) the Word, or merely exercised poetic license, and then some responsible person at headquarters did not check his work and we were sent a publication not fully truthful.

Deviation from the truth of God's Word should concern us all.

Claude A. Luttrell  
Jackson

## RE-EVALUATING FAITH

Editor:

I believe from time to time we should re-evaluate our faith in relationship to God's grace. Here is my latest comparison:

— My faith is within my control. Grace is under the control of God.

— My faith is sometimes weak. Grace is as powerful as God himself.

— My faith can grow. Grace is always at full strength.

— My faith varies in strength. Grace is constant.

— My faith is sometimes shaken. Grace is unshakable.

— Temptations affect my faith. Grace is not subject to temptation.

— My faith is the ship that brings me to the harbor of salvation when I am tempted. Grace is the anchor that holds me safe during the storms of doubt and temptation.

— My faith is my claim to salvation. God's grace is God's guarantee.

The only thing greater than Satan's temptation is God's love and forgiveness that brings us back into fellowship after we failed under our own strength.

Jesus Christ is the only One even to resist Satan's temptations. It is noteworthy that his temptations lasted forty days and nights, and the last temptation was power over the entire world.

Consider this when you think your faith is strongest. It will help you love the ones who have failed.

Warren Fortson  
Brandon

## PRAY FOR DISNEY DAY

Editor:

On Sunday, May 4, I am going to set aside time to pray for the associates of Walt Disney who have obviously

forgotten Walt and his original intentions for his park, a huge entertainment and educational complex in Florida. God is calling for all who will to pray on this day asking him to bring Christian values back to Disney. It's vital that everyone who reads this tell everyone he can about it at church, work, daycare, school, etc.

You can also voice your opinion by mail to headquarters at: Walt Disney Company, 500 S. Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91521.

Please follow God's lead and pray on Disney Day.

Jackie Payne  
Starkville

## SUPPORTS SEGREGATION

Editor:

I noticed in "The Baptist Record" two (letters) opposing integration. I was surprised but happy you print both views.

I would like to give my Bible reference in support of segregation -- Num. 25:6-18. One of the children of Israel brought a (Midianite) woman into the congregation, and when Phinehas saw it he rose up, took a javelin, and thrust the man and woman through the belly. The plague on Israel was stayed by God.

Wendell W. Gardner  
Jackson

# Music conference set

The second annual Music Mississippi Conference will be held May 1-3 at Eagle Ridge Conference Center in Raymond, according to Billy Causey, music minister and assistant pastor at Raymond Church, Raymond.

Causey said the interdenominational conference is designed to enable musicians to sample the latest Christian musical offerings in one location without traveling outside the state.

Representatives will be on hand from such well-known music publishers as Word,

Clydesdale and Maranatha, Praisegathering, Integrity, Genevox, Lillenas, Shawnee, Monarch, and Benson.

Marty Parks of Lillenas publishers will be the master of ceremonies. "One Voice," a drama and vocal group sponsored by the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will perform on the evening of May 1.

The Mississippi Singing Churchmen will be in concert on the evening of May 2.

Mini-concerts will also be given by Mary McDonald of Monarch publishers and Joseph Martin of Shawnee publishers.

For more information and to register, write to Music Mississippi, P.O. Box 728, Raymond, MS 39154-0728. Telephone: (601) 857-5501 or (601) 924-3815.

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## TO HIM BE GLORY FOREVER

Gracewood Baptist Church Sanctuary Dedication  
May 4, 1996 10:30 A.M.

Gracewood Church, Olive Branch, Mississippi, Northwest Association, has just completed their new 620 seat sanctuary. Dedication day will be May 4, at 10:30 a.m. The theme for the service is *To Him Be Glory Forever*. The service will feature special music, recognition of special guests, and messages from Dr. Bill Causey and Dr. Ronnie Mitchell. The public is invited to the dedication service. A meal will follow at noon. Please notify the church if you plan to stay for the noon meal. Gracewood is located 1/2 mile South of State Line Road in DeSoto County. Dr. Ronnie Mitchell is the pastor.

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6:23) God provides eternal life  
through the death and  
resurrection of his Son.

### 3. His promise to walk with us through life gives us peace.

Jesus said, "In me you may  
have peace. In this world you  
have tribulation, but take  
courage; I have overcome the  
world." (John 16:33)  
Jesus extends his promise of  
peace to us, but we must  
respond by accepting him as  
the missing piece in our lives.

You can make that commit-  
ment today by, (1) admitting  
you need God, (2) confessing  
your sins to him, and (3) by  
faith, receiving Christ as Lord.

If you make a decision for Christ  
today, contact a local  
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SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Baptist Building

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

\*admission is free  
\*meal provided free



Beverly Sonnier

The training will be led by Beverly Sonnier, former Minister of Christian Education of Paramount Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., and current Associate Minister. She has served as a Youth and Single Adult Consultant for the D.C. Baptist Convention, and continues to serve as Youth and Children Consultant, and Writer for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

A native of Stockton, California, Sonnier holds a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice from San Jose State University and a master of divinity from Howard University School of Divinity.

For more information contact Larry Salter or Dick Brogan  
at 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

Sponsored by the Sunday School Department and the Mission Extension Associational  
Administration Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board



## Messenger cards now available

Messenger cards for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting June 17-19 in Dallas are available from the executive director's office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) or from the Baptist associational offices around the state.

SBC messenger cards will not be mailed to individual churches. Old messenger cards marked "Rev. 3/67" should be destroyed. Messenger cards marked "Revised '87," "Revised '88," or "Revised '94" can be used.

For more information and to request messenger cards, contact the MBCB executive director's office at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. Ask for ext. 3801.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



The personal papers of Owen Cooper have been donated to the Department of Archives and History by his wife Elizabeth Cooper and their children, Nancy Cooper Gilbert, Carolyn Cooper, Owen Cooper Jr., Elizabeth Cooper, and Fran Cooper Miles. Cooper served as the last layman president of the Southern Baptist Convention and as vice president of the Baptist World Alliance. A Warren County native, Cooper was a graduate of Mississippi State University, University of Mississippi, and received a law degree from the Jackson School of Law. Pictured from left are ChemFirst CEO Kelly Williams; Elbert R. Hilliard, director, Department of Archives and History; Mississippi Chemical CEO Charles Dunn; and Nancy Cooper Gilbert. For more information, call H.T. Holmes, Department of Archives and History, (601) 359-6877.



GAs of Tylertown Church, Tylertown, recently shared the love of Christ by making and delivering Easter Gift bags to the home-bound and elderly in the community. GAs (from left, front row) are Heather Burchfield, Alex Pigott, Brittany Ginn, Sarah Slater; (middle row) Kimberly Patten, Jennifer Langhart, Amanda Stewart, Ashley May; (back row) Paulette Johnson, Gwen Langhart, Melissa Stringer, and Carla Stringer, leaders. Not pictured are Stephanie Harper and Kimberly Sewell.

**Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary (MABTS)**, Memphis, Tenn., has announced the retirement of B. Gray Allison as founding president, effective June 30. Allison served the school in this capacity for 25 years. Michael R. Spradlin has been elected as the second president of MABTS effective July 1. Spradlin is current director of the Northeast Branch of MABTS in Schenectady, N.Y.

**Springfield Church, Morton**, will observe the 125th year of its organization with an anniversary homecoming celebration on June 15. Springfield Church is interested in obtaining pictures and news clippings from aspects of church activities or the building that was occupied prior to 1950. For more information, write Sadie Cooper, 93 S. Mill St., or Carol Sistrunk, Cooperville Road, both in Morton, MS 39117.

**Macedonia Church, Calhoun City**, is receiving a blessing from a little village in the sanctuary which represents the Reedy Acre Baptist Children's Village in Water Valley. The WMU started making plans of what to do when they found out the Project Help for the year was "Child Advocacy." As the donations

are received, needed items are purchased. One hundred items were carried to the village in November, several larger and smaller items in December, and 45 more items in February. Ira Alley is pastor. The facilitator is Martha Rodgers.

A Spring Festival is set for April 26 at Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For more information or to reserve tickets, call (601) 847-3437, 847-1459, or 847-0910. Benny Still is pastor.

**Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson**, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on May 4.

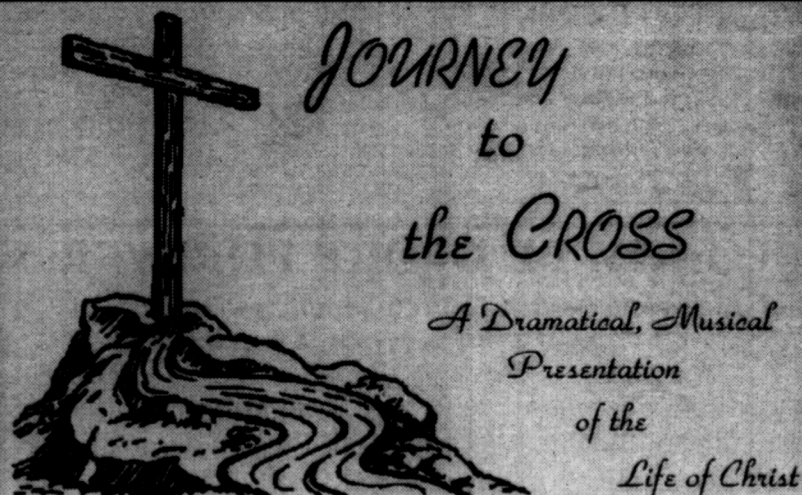
Services will begin at 11 a.m. with Clayton Bath, pastor, as the main speaker. Bath is retiring from full time ministry after serving 20 years at Port Gibson Church. Lunch in fellowship hall will follow the morning service. An afternoon program will be held at 1:30 p.m.

A Festival of Marriage will be held at First Church, Pearl. The times and dates are 6-9 p.m. (dinner served) on Friday; and 8:30 a.m. to noon (continental breakfast) on Saturday. The fee is \$10 per couple. For more information, call (601) 939-4476 or fax 939-9849.

## REVIVAL RESULTS

**Antioch, Belmont**: John Staszefski, Weir, evangelist; 17 saved, from 8 years of age to 80; 12 baptized; attendance grew from 60 the first night to over 130 the last night of the four day revival; Ellis Floyd, pastor.

**Blythe Creek Church, Methiston**: April 4-9; four professions of faith; Jimmy Flake, Ackerman, evangelist; Deanna Pearson, Ackerman, music; Danny Irvin, pastor.



Friday, May 2 - 7:00 p.m.

Sunday May 4 - 4:00 & 7:00 p.m.

Monday, May 5 - 7:00 p.m. Encore Performance (No Ticket Required)

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## HOMEcomings

**Monticello Church,** Monticello: April 27; 11 a.m.; James Fancher of Florence, guest speaker; 1:15 p.m. dinner on grounds followed by afternoon concert by James N. Fancher of Bethany, OK; Jimmy G. McGee, pastor.

**Crowder (North Delta):** April 27; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; covered dish at noon; Jackie Cooke, Columbia, speaker; Rusty Holcombe, Jackson, music; mini-concert by New Spirit, 10:30 a.m.; Harvey Sewell, pastor.

**Bond, Philadelphia:** April 27; Homecoming/Dedication Day; 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Charles King, former pastor, message; lunch will be served.

**Puckett (Rankin):** April 27; 10:45 a.m.; covered dish at noon; Ray Gates, Galilee Church, guest speaker; Dale Townsend, Puckett Church, music; Barry Ward, pastor.

**Ramah (Franklin):** May 11; services, 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds; several former pastors will be honored; Jim Burke, pastor.

**First, Poplarville:** April 27;

11 a.m.; Barry Corbett, former pastor, guest speaker; dinner on the grounds; plaque will be presented recognizing memorial gifts for sanctuary renovation; Bob Rogers, pastor.

**Goss, Columbia:** April 27; 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1:30 p.m. singing; Jerry Mixon, Lucedale, guest speaker; Ken Hedgepeth, Hattiesburg, music; David Laird, pastor.

**Oak Grove, Mendenhall:** May 4; services, 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds; William Kelly, speaker; Dan Ainsworth, music; Gary Lawson, pastor.

## STAFF CHANGES

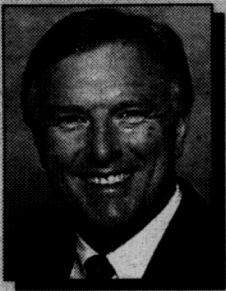
Charles E. Smith Jr, pastor of Thrasher Church, Prentiss Association since 1993, has resigned effective May 12 in order to enter full time vocational evangelism. Smith previously served at New Oak Grove Church, Union County. He surrendered to the ministry while a member of Friendship Church, Sturgis. Smith and his family plan to relocate to his home town of Duncan. Smith can be contacted by writing: Charles Smith Ministries, P. O. Box 257, Duncan, MS 38740; or by calling 601-395-2254.



Smith

Grenada County and a student at Blue Mountain College.

Tom Prather, minister of education and administration at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, has been named the new head administrator at Woodland Hills Baptist Academy, a private school located in Northeast Jackson. He will start his new position May 1. Prather also served as the director of financial aid and assistant to the president at Mississippi College from 1985-1995. He was on the staff at Clarke College, Newton, from 1981-1985. Prather is a graduate of Mississippi College and the University of Mississippi.



Prather

**First Church, Charleston,** has called Fletcher Moorman as minister of youth effective March 30. He is a native of

## NAMES IN THE NEWS

David Pinnow was ordained to the ministry on Jan. 23 by Fairhaven Church, Olive Branch. Pinnow will graduate from Mid-America Seminary in May. Jack Price is pastor.

Sammy Montgomery, 53, pastor of Turnpike Church, Pontotoc, died April 2 at his home. He previously pastored Community Church, Ripley. Services were held April 4 at Turnpike Church with Harvey Reeves and Doug Jones officiating. Burial was in Bethel Cemetery in Union County.

Survivors include his wife Frankie R. Montgomery; daughter Selena McGregor, Pontotoc; son Tye Montgomery, Pontotoc; two brothers, Bradley Montgomery, Pontotoc, and Shane Montgomery, Ecu; two sisters, Clarendia Parrish, Hurricane, and Beverly Cummings, Pontotoc; mother



Polly Montgomery, Pontotoc; and two grandsons, Brandon Montgomery and Will McGregor.

Ray Beall is now available for full-time evangelism. He can be contacted at 14 T.W. Bennett, Jr. Road; Apt. 203; Natchez, MS 39120.

Steve Smith is available for pulpit supply and revivals. He can be reached at 2847 Davis Road, Terry, MS 39170 or call (601) 372-9641. Smith previously served as youth minister at Goodrum Church, Vicksburg.

Bradley Rushing (left) was recently licensed to preach and is available for pulpit supply and preaching engagements. He will be entering New Orleans Seminary this fall. Pictured with Rushing is Jimmy Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb.



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Faithfully Fit First Place Seminar (\$80)

MAY 17

8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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Fitness Seminar (\$75)

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## Missionary dies in wreck

Wendell "Boots" Blackwell, Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil, was killed in an automobile accident late Saturday night, April 19.

According to family members in Mississippi, he was returning from a preaching engagement when a drunk driver veered across the road and struck his car head-on.

The accident occurred on the same road where Mississippi missionary Larry Braswell was injured in a car accident in September 1996.

Blackwell is survived by his wife Sherry and five children, ages 12 to 19. His parents, the W. W. "Ben" Blackwells of Baton Rouge, have been members of the Mississippi and Louisiana Campers on Mission organizations for many years.

He was also the nephew of Joe Blackwell, pastor of Fernwood Church, Pike Association.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete at press time.

# Goodwater Church makes building pact

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Goodwater Church, Simpson Association, needs a new sanctuary. Figuring it will take three years to raise the funds and build the new structure, pastor Karl Tingle challenged the church to also build other churches in other locations — one for each year of the project.

"During the building process we want to not just focus on ourselves, but on others," Tingle said.

This is not the usual way to run a building program, but Tingle believes God will bless the dual effort at building for themselves and for other Christians.

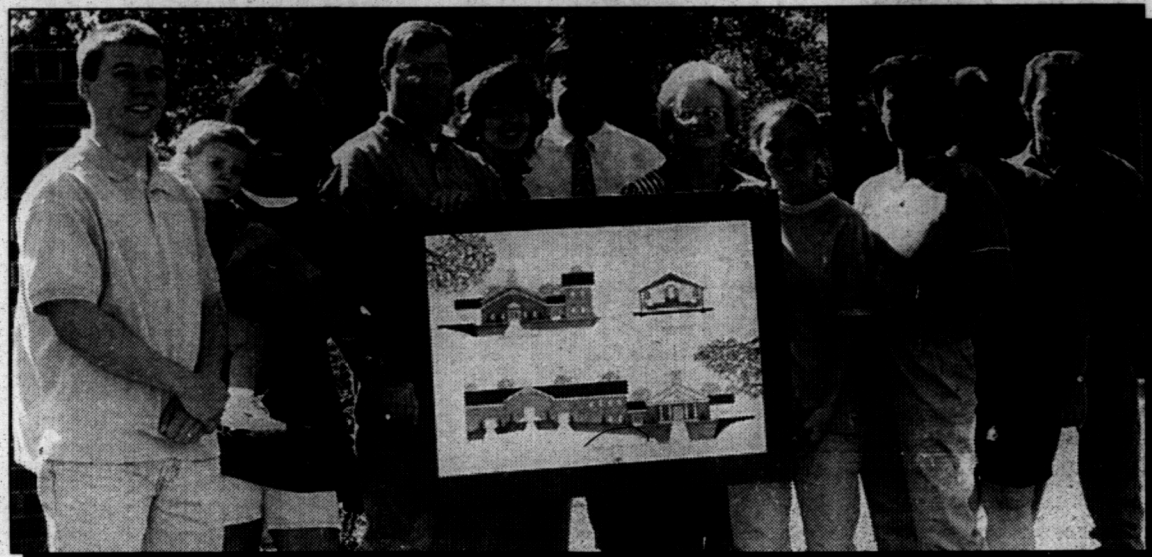
"On May 31-June 11, 1997, 24 people from Goodwater Church, along with four others, will travel to Icara, Brazil, to build a sanctuary and two new Sunday School classrooms, and to share Christ," Tingle said.

Team members are excited about the mission trip. "We study about foreign missions but we want to do something, be apart of it, take a chance to be involved in missions," said Patti Martin, a team member from Goodwater Church.

Tingle believes that the hands-on involvement will help the church in its own mission.

"When you experience missions first hand you have a greater understanding of the Great Commission," he said.

"Every spring and December, we look at raising money for foreign and home missions. This will put faces to it. I believe it



MAKING PLANS — Goodwater Church members surveying architectural drawings of their new sanctuary include (from left): Chris Johns, youth minister; Scyler, Amy, and Steve Burkes; Shelly and Karl Tingle, pastor; Rose Ainsworth, WMU director; Deshea Welch; Patti Martin; Cindy Mangum; and Billy Martin. (Photo by Carl M. White)

will be an investment that will increase our mission giving," Tingle said.

Woman's Missionary Union director Rose Ainsworth agrees. "This will help us in Simpson County to know that reaching people for Christ is not so hard. It is worth the experience," she said.

Goodwater's planned new sanctuary will seat 350 people, double the current facility's capacity.

Tingle recently

learned that Southern Baptist foreign missionary Wendell "Boots" Blackwell, who was to serve as their translator during the Brazil mission trip, was killed in an automobile accident. Tingle expressed concern for Blackwell's family and the ministry. He indicated, however, that the church will move forward with their plans.

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Mississippi College Music Department will present Phillip DeWayne Hill, Jackson, in a senior voice recital on April 28 at 8:15 p.m. in Aven Auditorium. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Hill of Meridian.

William Carey College will hold its annual Honors Day program on April 28 at 10:30 a.m. in Dumas L. Smith auditorium. The Honors Day program will recognize scholarship donors and their families, and recipients of scholarships funded by donors. Included in the recognition will be students who had committed themselves to a church related vocation and receive financial support from the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Ballet Magnificat! the first full-time professional ballet company ever formed with the purpose of sharing the gospel of Christ will present "Savior" at William Carey College, 7:30 p.m., on May 3. Tickets are \$5. For more information, call (601) 582-6192.

## REVIVAL DATES

**D'Lo Church, D'Lo:** May 4-7; Sunday, 11 a.m. (no Sunday p.m. service); Mon. - Wed. 7 p.m.; David Hanna, pastor, Sumrall United Methodist Church, evangelist; Bob Harris, D'Lo Church, music; Robert Sones, pastor.

**Clear Springs, Coffeeville:** April 27-May 2; Dwight Brown, Pontotoc, evangelist; Lonnie Waller, pastor.

**Kokomo Church, Kokomo:** May 4-7; Sunday 11 a.m. followed by lunch and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Paul Jones, Lake Arthur, LA, evangelist; Rick and Dot Jones, Kokomo, music; Glenn Nace, pastor.

**Old Union, Shannon:** April 27-30; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-

Wed, 7 p.m.; David Westmoreland, Blue Springs, evangelist; Gerald Waldrop, Randolph, music; Kenneth Kelly, pastor.

**Iuka, Iuka:** April 27-30; 7 p.m. nightly; Rick Spencer, Minden, La., evangelist; Jim Manley, pastor.

**Grace, Philadelphia:** April 25-27; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Bill Webb, Meridian, evangelist; Dennis Duvall, pastor.

**First, Yazoo City:** April 27-30; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Gene Henderson, Brandon, evangelist; Heith Wilkinson, Yazoo City, music; R. David Raddin, pastor.



Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*A woman in my church told enough terrible things that a whole family left the church. I don't call her behavior Christian. What should I do?*

Consider the purpose of meat tenderizer, which is intended to break down meat's tough texture and allow seasoning to penetrate. If you are to help this sister in your church, you must prepare her for a change in her tough "texture" so spiritual "seasoning" can penetrate. First, you must continue to place high value on this woman — hard as that might be for you. After all, she is still loved by God and Jesus died for her. Secondly, seek to understand what would cause her to do such a thing. Spend time with her to understand her hurts, fears, anger, etc., and be consistent in your Christian love. When she has thus been "tenderized," express yourself based on facts and not feelings. Be direct but don't judge, instead voicing your opinion. Listen closely to her responses. Don't allow any responsibility for her actions to be placed on you, which is a typical reaction in this situation. This person may never change, but you have plainly shown her

where you stand. Next time she may be more careful with her words, thanks to your perseverance.

*How can I tell my pastor to pray and search his heart about continuing to pastor our church? Does he not feel the opposition and dissatisfaction?*

You must first be sure that the opposition and dissatisfaction you perceive is the sentiment of the church body. Before you say anything to the pastor, get your facts in place and be sure you are not talking out of turn based on a vocal minority of the church's members. Have lunch with your pastor and be a listening ear. Tell him what you are sensing. Maybe he has detected the opposition and dissatisfaction, but feels as trapped and frustrated as the congregation. If you are convinced that his leaving is the will of God and the intention of the church body, ask the church's leaders to gather for prayer and fasting to seek the Lord's direction. Then do as the Lord leads. Also, study the first letter for tips on how to talk with your pastor — and don't allow your personal feelings to create a problem similar to that bad situation.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Living with wrong choices

I Samuel 10:17-27

By Greg McBride

After the conquest of Canaan by Israel, God ruled the people himself, through a series of judges, of whom Samuel was the last. Political pressures from without and failure of the leadership from within (Samuel's sons did not follow in their father's righteousness) induced the people of Israel to ask God to give them a king. Although this was against God's will for their lives, he instructed Samuel to gather the people at Mizpah and to give them what they wanted.

**God's People Seek Second Best (10:17-19).** At the meeting at Mizpah, God instructed

Samuel to remind the people of all that he had done for them in defeating the Egyptians, and delivering them into the land of Canaan. Evidently the people had forgotten all the good that God had done for them in the past. Their present fear from the threat of the surrounding nations had clouded their memories. They insisted on a king.

By choosing to place a human king over them, the people had in effect rejected God as their king. Yet even when God declared this fact to the people through his prophet Samuel, they failed to see the significance of the choice they were making.



McBride

By not focussing on the goodness of God in the past, Israel made a decision contrary to God's will. When the circumstances of our lives distract us from God's goodness, we too begin making poor choices.

**God Gives His People What They Seek (10:20-24).** God responded to the people's bad choice with consent. Though giving a king to Israel was not in his perfect will, it was in his permissive will. We should be careful to note that God did not abandon his people when they insisted on their wrong choice. Rather, he continued to work with them even though they had chosen less than his best.

Thus Samuel gathered all the tribes together and cast lots to identify the man whom God had chosen to be their king. In the end the lots fell on Saul. The

people marveled at the stature of the young Saul. Samuel charged the people to see the man whom God had chosen saying, "Surely there is no one like him among all the people." To this statement, all the people agreed. This choice of Saul points to God's continuing desire to provide the best for his people even in the face of their failures. God did not choose just any man to be king. He chose a man unequalled in Israel.

**Wrong Choices Still Have Consequences (10:25-27).** After the Selection of Saul, Samuel sent the people to their homes. Saul and all the valiant men who God had touched went to Gibeah. However, not all the people were satisfied with the choice of Saul as king. The worthless men despised him, considering him unable to deliver Israel from her enemies. Because of this, they refused to bring him the customary gifts for such an occasion.

This brief indication of dissension at Mizpah is a precursor to the division that eventually destroyed the nation of Israel. The history of the nation bears witness to this fact. At the death of Solomon, ten tribes rebelled against his son Rehoboam and set up their own kingdom. This "Northern kingdom" fell captive to Assyria in 722 B.C. The other two tribes (the "Southern kingdom") fell to the Babylonians 150 years later.

God's desire is for his people to achieve his perfect will for their lives. However, sometimes they make wrong choices. When God's people make wrong choices, he does not abandon them. Rather, he continues to work in their lives through his permissive will. However, this permissive will still has consequences with which they have to live.

McBride is pastor, Kittiwake Church, Pass Christian.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Good news, bad news

Revelation 3:7-22

By Paul Blanchard

When we accept Jesus as Savior and Lord of our lives, we also commit our lives to service for Jesus. There are many doors of service for Christians. As we serve Jesus, we must continue to have renewed fellowship with Him and the church.

The church at Philadelphia was located 20 to 30 miles southwest of Sardis. The name "Philadelphia" means "brotherly love." The city was referred to as "little Athens" because it had many temples of idolatry there. Located on a terrace 650 feet above sea level, Philadelphia was built to spread the Greek culture and

language. The worship of Bacchus (Greek) and of Dioysus (Roman), the god of wine, was very important. Hot springs with medicinal value were also located here.

In verse 7 is a description of Jesus as the holy one. The word holy means separated. Jesus is the absolute holy one (Hebrews 4:15). As one of complete, sinless perfection, Jesus could pay the price for our sins on the cross. He is seen as the true one. Truth is essential to salvation, (John 8:32; 1 Timothy 2:4).

Jesus is also seen as the one who has the key of David. This is an allusion to Isaiah 22:22. Keys are symbolic of authority. Isaiah 22:22 places the key of



Blanchard

David upon His shoulder. This symbolizes his government as indicated in Isaiah 9:6. Jesus is the only one with authority to establish his government (Matthew 28:18).

It is important to note that Jesus is seen as the one who sets before Philadelphia an "open door." Outside opposition is powerless against God's open doors. Philadelphia was built to spread the Greek culture. What a blessing this was for the church, since the New Testament was written in their language!

Jesus has no word of rebuke for this church. There is only praise.

This is not true for Laodicea. The city of Laodicea was almost destroyed by an earthquake in 60 A.D. It was of little importance until 190 B.C. when the Roman province of Asia

was formed. It then became a great industrial center, especially known for its black wool. Laodicea was also a medical center. The people of Laodicea were wealthy and very proud. They had an attitude of self-sufficiency, but in reality they were self-condemned. Jesus stated that they were "miserable, poor, blind, and naked." The Laodiceans were so proud of their wealth, health clubs, and fine wool that they forgot about Jesus.

This is the saddest of the seven letters in Revelation. It is the obituary of a dead church. In verse 15 the Lord addressed their lukewarm attitude. Being lukewarm can do more damage than being completely separated from a church. Some profess to be Christians, yet by their fruit they bring reproach upon the church. If these would identify with their true state, it would be less injurious to the church.

We serve a God of grace and mercy! The Lord still loved these saints. In Verse 19 he called for the Laodiceans to repent. The severity of the rebuke was a sign of the Lord's love for his people. Jesus states in verse 20 that he is right outside the door of our hearts, ready to come in. The decision is ours.

We need to compare Revelation 3:20 with Matthew 7:7. Jesus wants everyone to repent, to open the door. The door is only open to those who want it opened. Verse 20 is a tremendous view of the patient, pleading, promising Savior of men. Jesus makes three promises to those who open the door of their heart to Him.

1. I will come in to him.
2. I will sup (fellowship) with him.
3. I will open Heaven to him ("and he with me").

Blanchard is Director of Missions, Winston Association.

## LIFE AND WORK

### Source of power

Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-6, 17-18, 36-39

By Becky Briscoe Bennett

For some Christians the thought of witnessing is frightening. The Holy Spirit is the source of comfort as well as power. When God calls you to share your testimony, call upon the one God has given to help you. Sharing can be an exhilarating experience.

**Promise of Power (1:4-5, 8).** The last command of Jesus to his disciples was to wait. What a difficult thing for us to do. We always want to rush ahead. I am sure that the disciples wanted to avoid Jerusalem! Jerusalem had been the scene of great difficulty for them. Maybe those in power wanted to kill them. The human response would be to leave as

soon as possible; go home; get on with you life. Jesus said, "wait."

Waiting often leads to reward. Jesus promised a comforter and helper to come after he was gone. Jesus did not give the exact time the gift would arrive. He just said wait and the gift will come. Again the disciples misinterpreted the promise of the gift. They asked if at this time Jesus would restore the kingdom to Israel. Jesus responds with a promise. The promise was exciting. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the disciples would become power filled and would be witnesses wherever they were to go. God chose them to build his king-



Bennett

dom. Are you filled with the Spirit's power? Do you witness to what Jesus has done for you as you go from place to place? God chose you also to help in the building of his kingdom.

**Gift of Power (2:1-6).** The disciples listened to Jesus. They waited in Jerusalem for the gift God would send. Not only did they wait, but they encouraged others to wait with them. All the believers were gathered in one place. The scripture tells us they were in one accord. Even when Jesus was with them, they had strife among themselves. Now believers gathered together, worshiped with one mind, and looked forward to the unknown. God sent the gift just as Jesus had promised. I am sure it was frightening, but also thrilling.

God sent his gift personally but at the same time it was a public display. Those around

were attracted to the believers. God's gifts always come at the right time and the right place. The Holy Spirit went to work immediately. People from every country heard about the good news of Christ in their own language. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do things that on our own we could never do.

**People of Power (2:17-18).** Peter spoke to their gathering crowds. Quoting from the prophet Joel, Peter reminded the people that God had promised this very scene. God's spirit was with them. The believers were people of power because they were people of God, filled with his spirit. Are you a person of power, willing to share Jesus with those around you?

**Results of Power (2:36-39).** In recent months we have seen the devastation of tornadoes and floods. Whether from first hand knowledge or through the media the result of the power of those weather disas-

ters was clear.

The result of the coming of the Holy Spirit was just as clear. Peter preached, but it was the Holy Spirit who did the work. Peter witnessed. He told the truth as he had seen it and experienced it. The Holy Spirit pricked hearts and convicted men of their sin. As the people turned to the apostles to ask what they must do, Peter simply stated, "turn away from your sins, believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, make his teaching your rule of faith and practice, and make this public by submitting to baptism."

In Christians the world should see the results of Christ just as clearly as we can see the devastation of a natural disaster. The Holy Spirit is in our lives and the evidence should be seen. Do you show the results of God's power to the world around you?

Bennett is Dean of Students at Blue Mountain College.



# Mississippian providing Christian SALT

By Erich Bridges  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

KINUSKUSAN, Philippines (BP) — Genius is often achieved by the patient, persistent pursuit of a simple idea.

That's what American inventor Thomas Edison meant when he talked about "1% inspiration and 99% perspiration."

Foreign Mission Board missionary Harold Watson of Hattiesburg is no genius — in his own estimation, at least.

He says he's just a Brooklyn, Miss.-born farm boy who felt the call to share Jesus overseas before he knew what an agricultural missionary was.

Almost everyone who knows him well calls him a visionary, but that makes him uncomfortable.

"Maybe a little vision," he

allows. "I'm just curious."

Perhaps, but it's curiosity that keeps him up at night searching agricultural publications for new ideas, though he's less than a year from retirement.

It keeps him walking through fields with farmers — bending to knead soil in his fingers, making suggestions for better production.

It also keeps him on the road or in the air most of the time these latter days of his missionary career. He hurries to meet government officials, development workers or anyone else who will listen to the ideas behind SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology), the simple but effective method he developed to help hungry upland farmers grow more food and stop soil erosion.

Plenty of people are listening now, because SALT works. It works because salt-of-the-earth people — illiterate farmers, for instance — can understand and apply it.

It works because it is simple, unlike many of the big development projects carried out over the years by governments and relief agencies. Watson and his team started teaching "appropriate technology" among the poor long before it became fashionable.

These are productive days for the ministry of the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center, which Watson founded in 1971.

However, countless Asian hills and their hungry residents remain unreached by SALT — or by the gospel. That bothers Watson.

The lives of half a billion poor people could be revolutionized if SALT technologies could be applied throughout the world's tropical uplands, Watson estimates.

Suffering, forgotten people. Lost people who need to know Jesus.

As his retirement at the end of 1997 approaches, "I see so many things I wanted to do that aren't done."

The ideas he has pioneered will go on.



INDIAN SALT — In India, Southern Baptist missionary Harold Watson (right) of Hattiesburg and consultant Calvin Fox examine pasture grasses they're trying out in a new version of SALT: Sloping Agricultural Land Technology). (BP Photo by Don Rutledge)

SALT gives millions of farm families the simple tools they need to survive — and rescue their precious farmland from death by erosion.

It also enables missionaries and Baptists to introduce those families to the simplest and most powerful idea of all:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son ..."  
A child can grasp it.

## Kid's Page



Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Chelsey Vincent and I am 8 years old. I attend Parkway Elementary and I am in the 3rd grade. My daddy is in seminary at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Tex. My family and I moved from Agricola, Miss. last August and I would like to have some Mississippi pen pals.

Please write to:  
1824 Woodhall Way  
Ft. Worth, TX 76134

Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Monica Vincent, I am 5 years old and I am in kindergarten at Parkway Elementary. I would like to write some Mississippi pen pals.

I moved with my family to Fort Worth, Tex. last August

because my daddy is studying at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. I get lonely for a letter to me — could you write me soon?

Please write to:  
1824 Woodhall Way  
Ft. Worth, TX 76134



## GAs enjoy 'Happy Days'

The "Happy Days Diner," a GA Mother/Daughter event sponsored by Lauderdale Association was held March 1 at Southside Church, Meridian.

Dressed in 50's style, GAs and their moms enjoyed contests, a hamburger supper, and an inspirational program in a diner setting.

As an associational missions action project, over 100 pairs of new socks were collected for missions centers in Lauderdale Association.

Mark McDonald, pastor of Hopewell Church, Scott Association, and a deputy sheriff in Hickory; and Scott Association pastor, Dale Round, shared their testimonies and experiences urging GAs to "run just as hard as you can" when confronted with drugs.

As a special highlight, GAs were intro-

duced to Lulu, a special K-9 drug dog. In closing, GAs and moms were invited to recommit themselves to avoid drugs. To contact this group for church events call McDonald at (601) 635-2835.

GA consultants in Lauderdale Association are Beth Ranager and Tina Weil.



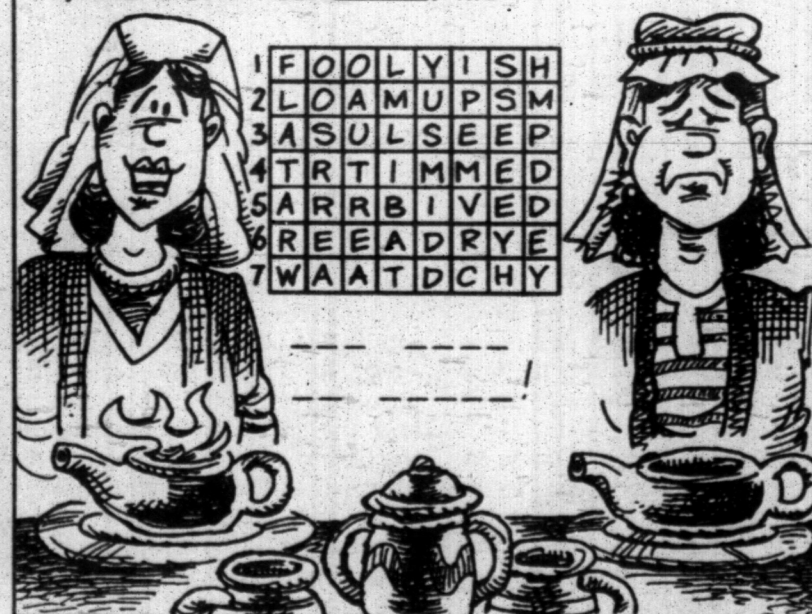
Lauderdale Association GAs meet Lulu the drug dog during the "Happy Days Diner" event March 1 in Meridian.

## THE WISE & FOOLISH WOMEN

WHAT IS THE LESSON OF THIS PARABLE?

MATTHEW 25:1-13

- 1) FIVE WERE WISE AND FIVE WERE \_\_\_\_\_ V.2
- 2) THE FOOLISH TOOK THEIR \_\_\_\_\_ BUT NO OIL. V.3
- 3) THEY ALL BECAME DROWSY AND FELL \_\_\_\_\_ V.5
- 4) THEY ALL WOKE UP AND \_\_\_\_\_ THEIR LAMPS. V.7
- 5) WHILE THE FOOLISH WOMEN WERE BUYING OIL, THE BRIDGROOM \_\_\_\_\_ V.10
- 6) THE WOMEN WHO WERE \_\_\_\_\_ WENT INTO THE WEDDING BANQUET. V.10
- 7) THEREFORE KEEP \_\_\_\_\_ V.13



Source: Fun Stuff for Kids by Michael Streff, (Zondervan, 1990), available at your local bookstore or by calling 800-727-3480.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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RLO LDLQG CUTR ZL  
CTZXLWO TFOU OSL  
SPBSLQ AUQLQC JUQ  
OSLQL PC FU AUQLQ  
ZTO UJ - BUN: OSL  
AUQLQC OSHO ZL HQL  
UQNHPLN UJ BUN.  
QUYHFC OSPQOLLE: UFL

Clue: D equals V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Galatians One Ten.